

REMARKS

Claim 35 has been added depending on claim 5 and reciting that the inorganic whiskers have a long axis dimension L of from 10-100 μm based on the disclosure at the bottom of page 20 in the substitute specification combined with the disclosure at page 37, line 25 in the substitute specification for the lower limit of the range.

Entry of the above amendment is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the above amendment, claims 1 and 3-35 are all the claims pending in the application.

With respect to claim 35, Applicants submit that the disclosure at col. 5, lines 10-13 in Shinohara teaches away from such an invention. Namely, Shinohara discloses that when the average particle size of the primary particle of a ceramic powder is over 1.0 μm , the separator may become fragile and also the coated surface may become fragile. In view of this disclosure, one would not have used inorganic whiskers having a long axis dimension L of from 10-100 μm as recited in claim 35, and thus the invention of claim 35 is not anticipated by or obvious over the cited art.

Also, Applicants submit that the other pending claims are not anticipated by or obvious over the cited art for the reasons of record, and reconsideration of those reasons is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants are considering filing further comments in response to the rejections of record, and thus are filing a Request for Suspension of Action for 3 months herewith to provide time to prepare and file those comments.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
U.S. Application No. 10/776,184

Attorney Docket No. Q79839

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

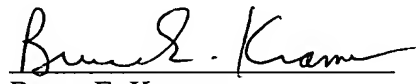
Respectfully submitted,

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